

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: FORMER PRESIDENT SARAGAT ON POLITICS AND JOURNALISM
IN AMERICA

1. IN A RAGING RED-BORDERED EDITORIAL IN HIS PARTY'S NEWSPAPER (L'UMANITA, FEBRUARY 1), SOCIAL DEMOCRAT PARTY FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, GIUSEPPE SARAGAT, UNBURDENED HIMSELF ON THE SUBJECT "WHAT KIND OF ITALY AND WHAT SORT OF AMERICA." CITING HIS ILLUSTRIOUS 50-YEAR RECORD, HIS FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM WHICH ALMOST EXECUTED HIM, HIS HARD YEARS IN EXILE, HIS BATTLE FOR DEMOCRACY IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD, HIS SERVICE AS MINISTER AND THEN PRESIDENT OF HIS COUNTRY, SARAGAT ASKS RHETORICALLY WHY HE ALSO SHOULD NOT ENJOY THE RIGHT OF ALL CITIZENS: THE RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM CALUMNY. HE WAS REFERRING TO REVELATIONS FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES INVESTIGATING THE CIA WHICH ALLEGED THAT HE IS IN THE PAY OF THE CIA.

2. HE SCORNFULLY TAKES ISSUE WITH A JANUARY 30 EDITORIAL IN /LA STAMPA/ (WHICH APPARENTLY HAD A PIPELINE TO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE LEAKS) IN WHICH THE ANONYMOUS AUTHOR PRAISES THE "THIRST FOR TRUTH" IN AMERICA, DEPLORES ITS ALLEGED LACK IN ITALY, AND CITES THE SAYING: "IT IS NECESSARY TO BRING SCANDALS TO LIGHT." THE AUTHOR, SARAGAT RETORTS, FORGETS A SAYING OF FRANCIS BACON ("UNJUSTLY ATTRIBUTED TO THE JESUITS"): SLANDER
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BOLDLY, AND SOMETHING WILL STICK." SARAGAT THEN CITES

APPROVINGLY /IL MESSAGGERO'S/ US BASED CORRESPONDENT LUCIO MANISCO'S INTERPRETATION OF WHAT IS NOW GOING ON IN WASHINGTON POLITICAL LIFE: "THE REVELATIONS AND POLEMICS IN COURSE ARE THE RESULT OF A CLOSE STRUGGLE, WAGED BY SURPRISE STROKES AND POLITICAL VENDETTAS BETWEEN VARIOUS POWER GROUPS WHICH ARE OPERATING IN AMERICA IN THE RUINOUS WAKE OF WATERGATE."

3. SIGNIFICANT QUOTES FROM SARAGAT, INCLUDING ONE ON THE US PRESS, FOLLOW: CITING A 1964 MEETING WITH DEGAULLE IN WHICH SARAGAT, THEN FOREIGN MINISTER, DETERMINEDLY UPHELD THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE AND LOYAL FRIENDSHIP WITH AMERICA..." AT A CERTAIN POINT DEGAULLE BURST OUT WITH: 'YOU CANNOT TAKE THE AMERICANS SERIOUSLY.' I WAS SHOCKED AND THE CONVERSATION ENDED SOMEWHAT BRUSQUELY. NOW I BEGIN TO ASK MYSELF WHETHER DEGAULLE WAS COMPLETELY WRONG. CERTAINLY HE WAS WRONG TO TAKE ISSUE WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE...BUT IF HE WAS ALLUDING TO THE AMERICAN POLITICAL CLASS, TODAY I THINK HE WAS RIGHT, AT LEAST IN PART."

"WHAT IS TAKING PLACE TODAY IN THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES AGAINST ITALIAN POLITICIANS WHO FOR MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY HAVE FOUGHT FOR THE LIBERTY AND INDEPENDENCE OF THEIR COUNTRY, AND TODAY FIND THEMSELVES SLANDERED IN THE MOST SHAMEFUL MANNER, IS WORSE THAN A DIRTY TRICK, IT IS AN ENORMOUS BESTIALITY. THOSE (WHO DO THIS) HAVE NO REGARD FOR THE TRUTH, THEY TELL AND DO NOT TELL, SLANDER AND RETRACT. IN FACT, THEY SEEK, BY SUCH LOW TACTICS, TO LIQUIDATE THEIR ADVERSARIES IN THE SENATE AND IN THE HOUSE FOR THE PRESIDENCY (OF THE COUNTRY).

"FINALLY, I WOULD LIKE TO SAY A FEW WORDS ON THE SUPERIOR AIR OF THE IMPORTANT AMERICAN PRESS TOWARD THE ITALIAN POLITICAL CLASS. I REFER PARTICULARLY TO THE /NEW YORK TIMES/ AND THE /WASHINGTON POST/. THERE MAY BE A THIRST FOR TRUTH IN THESE GREAT NEWSPAPERS, BUT THERE IS CERTAINLY A CONTEMPT FOR OUR ENTIRE (ITALIAN) PEOPLE AND FOR THE POLITICAL CLASS WHICH REPRESENTS IT. /THE NEW YORK TIMES/ GOES SO FAR AS TO DEFINE THE ITALIAN POLITICAL CLASS AS A CLASS OF CONNIVING POLITICIANS. WE CERTAINLY HAVE SOME CONNIVING POLITICIANS IN ITALY, BUT THEY EXIST ALSO IN AMERICA. AND PERHAPS MORE SO THAN IN ITALY. IS IT CONCEIVABLE IN ITALY THAT A CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC, AFTER AN ORGY, FALLS INTO A RIVER WITH HIS

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CAR AND HALF-NAKED SECRETARY WHO DROWNS?....ITALIAN JOURNALISM HAS NO NEED TO DRAW INSPIRATION FROM AMERICA'S; RATHER THAN DISSOLVE INTO HYMNS OF PRAISE TO THE POLITICAL CLASSES OF THE US, IT WOULD DO BETTER TO DRAW ITS INSPIRATION FROM THE BEST JOURNALISTIC TRADITIONS OF THIS COUNTRY....VOLPE

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